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## Message from the Mayor

I'm pleased the DC Council and I have been able to work together to create a Fiscal Year 2006 budget that builds on our progress and serves residents across our city.

Thanks to our collective work, we can proudly say that the District is in much better shape today than it was nearly a decade ago. With our fiscal house in order, city services improved, and a robust environment for economic and housing development, we now have an opportunity to ensure that our renaissance reaches every neighborhood in the District of Columbia.

It's a sign of our progress that Councilmembers and I agreed on the major parts of the \$5 billion document that will shape the future of our city. During my State of the District Address and in my budget, I called for a broad range of service improvements. We are fortunate that the city's booming real estate market and healthy local economy allow us not only to provide basic services but to fund new initiatives.

I'm happy that the Council agreed to increase funding for the University of the District of Columbia, a great educational institution. I'm also pleased that the Council signed on to my tax relief package.

Additionally, the Council supported my *Great Streets* initiative. After decades of neglect, we finally have the ability to make historic improvements that will define our city long after we are all gone. Along these lines, a major change to the 11th Street Bridge will reduce traffic for residents in Wards 7 and 8, and connect communities on both sides of the Anacostia.

My *Way to Work* proposal was also well received by the Council. The *Way to Work Act of 2005* will help the chronically unemployed get jobs and keep them. In the first year, my goal is to target 1,800 people in our most troubled neighborhoods who, with help, are capable of entering the workforce.

One of the proposals that I'm most proud of is our bold *New Communities* plan. This new initiative is an innovative and holistic approach to creating healthy neighborhoods. What's "new" is a partnership with residents, which will create a blueprint for improved schools, libraries, job training, recreation, health centers and housing options for all income levels.

The bottom line is I am optimistic that this budget will serve the best interests of the people of the District.



## AGENCY WEBSITES

Office of Tax and  
Revenue

Department of Parks and  
Recreation

Department of  
Employment Services

Metropolitan Police  
Department

Office of Boards and  
Commissions

Commission on the Arts  
and Humanities

Department of Human  
Services

## LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

Hands on DC

DC Convention and  
Tourism

DC Public Library

# Reaching Out to Help Crime Victims

On May 4, I announced that I am committing \$16.8 million to increase services for victims of crime in the District. Victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and homicide deserve our support and attention. We need to make sure that we have critical services in place to support them.

Last June, I established the Office of Victim Services to serve as a dedicated voice for victims to ensure that we comprehensively address victims' concerns, needs and rights and integrate services for victims into the work of District government agencies.

Here are some of the projects that the \$16.8 million will go to:

- \$3.5 million to provide for 150 – 175 new emergency and transitional beds for victims of domestic violence
- \$2 million for the creation of a community-based Victim Services Center with co-located services for victims of violent crimes
- \$2.5 million for the expansion and development of direct services to victims

I know that Councilmember Kwame Brown has been an advocate for this issue—in particular, increasing the number of beds for victims of domestic violence in the District. He is responsible for seeding the Domestic Violence Fund with \$1 million.

It is always important to remember that for every crime that occurs, there is a victim—too often, many victims.

# Recycling Guide Hits the Streets

We're working harder to encourage recycling in the District.

To help businesses comply with District recycling laws, the Office of Recycling in the Department of Public Works is offering a free Commercial Recycling Guide and a Recycling Plan Submission form—both online.

Each year, the District of Columbia produces more than 800,000 tons of trash. According to the Office of Recycling, nearly 70 percent of that amount is generated by commercial and non-residential sources. To cut down on the amount of waste going to landfills and incinerators, the District requires all businesses and non-residential buildings to recycle.

Commercial establishments must pay for waste disposal based on weight, volume or the number of times trash must be collected. By implementing an effective recycling program, a business can reduce its volume of waste, resulting in lower disposal costs.

In addition to being more cost effective, recycling decreases the amount of trash going directly into the District's "waste stream." By recycling, businesses can improve our region's environmental health by saving costly natural resources, cutting down on certain types of pollution and decreasing the need for more waste facilities in or near our communities.

A commercial recycling program includes separation of recyclables from other solid waste, ensuring an adequate number of containers for separated recyclables and hiring a licensed, registered recycling hauler to regularly pick up recyclables.

Recycling is required of all commercial establishments. These include: office buildings, churches, retailers, warehouses, apartment buildings (with four or more units), co-ops, condominiums, service companies, bars and restaurants, museums, associations, non-profit organizations, and universities.

Recyclable materials include:

- Paper—newspaper, cardboard, mail, envelopes, and office paper
- Aluminum, steel and tin cans
- Brown, green and clear glass bottles and jars

Recyclables should be free of any contaminants such as paint (and other chemical substances), animal wastes and garbage. Food containers, such as carry-out cartons and pizza boxes, are not recyclable.

For more information and to obtain the guide, please visit: [www.dpw.dc.gov](http://www.dpw.dc.gov)



## Health Care Liability Reform

On May 4, I was proud to introduce the *Health Care Liability Reform Act of 2005*. This is not the first time I have introduced legislation to address the rising cost of medical malpractice insurance premiums in the District. As these rise, so too does the cost of health care. Some health care providers—especially providers in high-risk specialties such as obstetrics—are considering reductions in services or relocating outside of the District. This is unacceptable.

The District has the dubious distinction of having among the very highest malpractice insurance rates and the highest jury awards in the nation. In drafting this legislation, my main concern has been striking the right balance between patient safety, insurance reform and tort reform to ensure that District residents have access to quality and affordable health care.

My legislation provides immunity from liability to all physicians, registered nurses and nurse-midwives who provide free care in the District. Currently, only OB-GYNs who provide free care are protected.

The legislation reforms the tort system for health care liability claims in the following key ways:

- It requires a plaintiff to get a certificate of merit by a licensed physician before commencing a medical liability lawsuit.
- It sets caps on non-economic damages at \$250,000 for a claim against a physician, \$500,000 for a claim against a hospital, with an overall cap of \$1 million. It does not cap economic damages that include lost wages and medical care costs.
- Finally, it limits attorney contingency fees on a graduated scale in order to maximize payments to the injured patient.

I am calling on the Council to give this matter a fresh look and to recognize that states all across the country are taking appropriate steps to safeguard patient access and provide some measure of relief to the doctors who serve their communities.

## Green Roofs and Protecting Our Environment

Last week, I participated in the Green Roofs for Health Communities Conference, held here in the District. The conference brought together a range of people from the environmental and business communities to discuss an important topic.

On summer days, our city becomes a "hot box." It's up to seven degrees warmer than surrounding areas and an incubator for smog and pollutants. That temperature rise—the "urban heat island effect"—threatens public health and creates greater energy demand.

That's where "Green Roofs" come in. We can replace heat absorbing tar and other heat-conducting roof materials with plants and grasses, thus transforming roof spaces into living, vegetated, positive environments. Green roofs provide a sensible, beautiful, appealing way to address some of the most urgent ecological issues facing our city and bring a wide range of benefits:

- Reduced energy consumption for buildings
- Extended roof lifespan
- Superior storm water management
- Improved local air quality

Consider this: If 80 percent of all new buildings in the District had green roofs and 20 percent of existing buildings were retrofitted with green roofs, there would be a 15 percent reduction in the total number of Combined Sewer Outflow discharges (CSO). That means a healthier Anacostia River, a healthier Potomac River and a healthier Rock Creek.

Our city's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is committed to ensuring that all new construction and renovation projects are environmentally safe and friendly—and that benefits our neighborhoods. DPR will install green roofs at the following recreation centers and pavilions in 2005:

- Columbia Heights Recreation Center
- Trinidad Recreation Center in Northeast
- Riggs La Salle Recreation Center
- Oxon Run Picnic Pavilions, east of the Anacostia

Last month, I reiterated my strong commitment to sustainable development in several ways. For example, new government buildings will be "green," which means they will contribute to making our environment healthy and clean. And I'm setting up "green roof incentives" to jump-start green roofs in our city.



## District Activities



Mayor Williams greets volunteers during construction of a fully accessible playground for children at National Children's Center Southeast campus in Ward 8.



Mayor Williams delivered remarks May 4 at the grand opening of the new Anacostia HOPE Center in Southeast DC. The HOPE Center will help area residents obtain mortgages or small business loans with local banks who can provide the access to capital in the wards with the lowest median income in the city.



Mayor Williams announced May 10 that STUDIOS Architecture was the winner of a design competition for a new environmental education center that will help transform Kingman Island in the Anacostia River into a nature park.

## Community News

- [Barracks Row Earns Great American Main Street Award](#)
- [Mayor Williams Announces Kingman Island Environmental Project](#)
- [Washington, DC, Retains Metropolitan Cup](#)

[View All News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 5/14 | <b>Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Electronics Recycling Day*</b><br>9 am – 3 pm<br>Carter Barron Amphitheatre<br>Parking Lot<br>16th and Kennedy Streets, NW |
| 5/20 | <b>Bike to Work Day</b><br>8 am – 9 am<br>Freedom Plaza<br>14th and Pennsylvania Avenue NW<br><b>Contact:</b> (202) 628-2500   |
| 5/21 | <b>Man 2 Man Conference</b><br>9 am – 3:30 pm<br>Ballou Senior High School<br>3401 – 4th Street, SE  |
| 5/26 | <b>Mayor's Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration</b><br>12 pm – 8 pm<br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Public Library<br>901 G Street, NW                         |

